nature net

The **Nature***Kenya* Newsletter — November 2000

NATURE KENYA LIBRARY

WHAT'S NEW!

ARBORETUM WALK RESURFACING BEGINS

FONA committee members and CABRO management launched the road works for the new surface on Thursday 5 October '00.

FORD Foundation Good Neighbours Committee have donated sufficient funding ta FONA to resurface, with CABRO, the main Arboretum walk from the gate to the centre.

TROPICAL BIOLOGY ASSOCIATION (TBA)

NEW ALUMNI BROCHURE

TBA launched its new alumni brochure in September. This brochure is part af the follow-up suppart programme far African bialagists.

TBA is working ta meet the challenge of biodiversity conservation by establishing an informed, well-motivated community af tropical bialogists based in Europe and tropical countries. Through its field courses, for African and European bialogists, TBA provides training in current concepts and techniques in tropical ecology and conservation and a forum for exchange af ideas and contacts.

The ***TBA Alumni Association*** brings together alumni and draws them into an international network of tropical biologists and conservation practitioners.

The Follow-up Support programme aims to:

- Keep alumni informed of training and internship opportunities, job vacancies, and sources of project funding in their particular field of biology and conservation
- Provide a means by which institutions and individuals working in biodiversity research and conservation can recruit collaborators, students or employees from among alumni who have relevant skills and experience.
- Form a network of conservation institutians and professionals and stimulate co-operation and exchange of information.

Nature Kenya administers the alumni pragramme for TBA. For further information contact the Project Officer at the Nature Kenya address or e-mail tba@africaonline.co.ke or visit the TBA website www.zoo.cam.ac.uk/tba

We are all over Africa and Europe...

RENEWAL REMINDER

Dear Member,

Thanks to your support Nature Kenya is becoming recognised as a thoughtful and independent voice for the environment in Kenya. Please help to keep us active by renewing your membership today.

All memberships in Nature Kenya dated prior to 1st September 2000 expire at the end of this year. *Nature Net* will only be sent to paid up members in 2001. So please return the enclosed subscription form with your dues by hand, cheque or money order.

We appreciate your support, and we look forward to assisting you with your renewal.

TALKS & VIDEOS

The Lion's King (30 mins BBC production) & Thunderbirds (30 mins)

Monday 13 November '00, 5:30 p.m. at the National Museums of Kenya, Nairobi, FORD HALL

Refreshments prior & Transport (to town) after available.

Action for Biodiversity Conservation

NATURE KENYA, P. O. Box 44486, Nairobi. Tel: 749957 / 746090 Fax: 741049 E-mail: eanhs@africaonline.co.ke

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (GSP)

The Program: The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan, Nigeria, invites outstanding students of agriculture and related sciences from sub-Saharan African countries to compete for a limited number of MSc or PhD scholarships.

Research topic and location: The IITA research agenda addresses crop improvement, plant health, and resource and crop management within a farming systems framework. Research focuses on smallholder cropping systems in the humid tropics of Africa and on the following major food crops: cassava, maize, plantain and banana, yam, cowpea, and soybean.

Benefits: Cost of travel to and from the host university; cost of travel to and from the IITA research station where the research will be undertaken; tuition fees; operational costs of research, generous allowances (for living expenses, books and thesis production); and a provision for insurance and medical expenses both at the host university and the research location.

Deadline: 31 December of the year preceeding the year of award.

Applications should be sent to the Head, Information Services and Training at: International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, PMB 5320, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria, Phone: (234 2) 241 2626, E-mail: iita@cgiar.org, Fax: (234 2) 241 2221 OR International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, c/o L.W. Lambourn & Co., Carolyn House, 26 Dingwall Road, CROYDON CR9 3EE, UK, Phone: (44 20) 8686 9031, Fax: (44 20) 8681 8583

For further information, please refer to our website at http://www.cgiar.org/iita

RESEARCH AWARDS

Masters Degree Programme in
Systematics & Conservation Evaluation

In keeping with its strong focus on biodiversity in human-influenced landscapes, a collaborative effort by the Department of Zoology & Entomology, Department of Botany, and the Department of Genetics, University of Pretoria has developed a new taught Masters course in Systematics and Conservation Evaluation in Zoology, Entomology and Botany. The course focuses on specialized topics and deals with the description of biodiversity and the tools necessary for conservation evaluation and planning.

The course is presented in all collaborating departments and includes specialised coursework blocks presented by internationally recognised speciolists. On completion of the course, graduates will have state-of-the-art knowledge and skills, and will be highly competitive in the international Systematics & Conservation markets. Apart from preparing graduates for careers in Natural History Museums, Herbaria, Universities and other centres of biodiversity science, the course is also designed to provide the basis for Ph.D. research in systematic biology and biodiversity science.

Entrance Requirements

BSc. (Hons) or equivalent
Candidates who have not previously passed a course in Biometrics, statistics or research methodology at the BSc. (Hons) level are required, in addition to the above, to attend and pass the Research Methods module presented by the Department of Zoology & Entomology, to qualify for the MSc. degree.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT: Dr Chris Chimimba, Department of Zoology & Entomology, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, 0002 FAX: 012 362 5242 E-mail: ctchimimba@zoology.up.ac.za

Fundraising Ideas Competition

Do you have some interesting, foolproof fundraising ideas?

Membership alone does not fully support all Nature Kenya activities. Currently we have had the support of a BirdLife partner, the RSPB. In future we will need to do our own fundraising. The fundraising can be for running the office or sponsoring *Nature Net*, the birdwalks, or a particular project.

Write a brief outline of your idea and send it by post, fax or email to the Office Manager, Nature Kenya.
The winning entry will win a prize!
Entry deadline: Thursday 30 November '00

EXCURSIONS

Plant Walk at the Nairobi Arboretum

Sunday 12 November,
10:00 a.m. - noon

The Plants Committee of Nature Kenya invites you to a morning walk at the Arboretum, led by Ann Birnie, FONA Chairperson and Geoffrey Mwachala, Research Scientist, E.A. Herbarium.

Come join a team of plant amateurs and experts in learning the taxonomy and general biology of tree species at the Arboretum; theory and practice on collection of herbarium specimens; and inventory of herbaceous vegetation.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

POT LUCK OUTINGS

Members meet at the National Museum, Nairobi car park at 9:00 a.m. the third Sunday of every month, **i.e. 19 November**. They decide where to go and what to do - usually observing birds and nature in general. Bring lunch.

TREE WALK

Arboretum guided Tree Walks on the last Monday of every month i.e. **27 November from 9:30 a.m.** Meet at the FONA offices beside the Girl Guides HQ.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRDWALKS

Bird watching walks at sites in and around Nairobi. Meet at the National Museum car park every Wednesday at 8:45 a.m. Return about 12:30 p.m. Those who are not members can get temporary membership at Kshs 100 per birdwalk, payable on arrival at the car park.

* MEMBERS LUNCH

Join this informal discussion group on **Wednesday 29 November,'00, 1:00 p.m.** and share with other members your thoughts on issues related to wildlife and the environment. Nairobi Botanic Garden, National Museums of Kenya. Bring your lunch.

ARABUKO SOKOKE (COAST)

The Saturday birdwatch with the Arabuko Sokoke Forest Guides Association is on the first Saturday of each month i.e. **4 November, at 6:30 a.m.** from the Visitor Centre, Gede. Cost 100/- per person.

DECLARATION

Nature Kenya does not accept any responsibility whatsoever in respect of negligence of any of its staff, volunteers or members organising the outings/trips or for any for loss, injury, death or damage to property.

NOVEMBER DIARY

Wed 1	Birdwalk
Sat 4	Arabuko-Sokoke birdwalk
Mon 6	Video
Wed 8	Birdwalk
Sun 12	Plant Walk
Wed 15	Birdwalk
Sun 19	Pot Luck
Wed 22	Birdwalk
Mon 27	Tree Walk
Wed 29	Birdwalk & Member Lunch

Bird Hotline

Please note the records below are unconfirmed

African Cuckoo Hawk
Aberdare National Park / Atlas Square 62 D/Oct Elly Gathungu

Blue Swallow (30+ individuals), Black Caucal, Croaking Cisticola, Flappet Lark, Grey Kestrel, Common Button-quail
Lambwe Valley in Ruma National Park/ Atlas Square 60 C/Oct
Chris Hill, Jeffrey James, Nicodemus Nalianya, Sylvester Karimi, Anastacia Mwauro, Michael Maino

Blue Swallow (5 individuals), Bar-breasted Firefinch *Busia grasslands at Mungatsi / Atlas Square 48 C/Sept*
Nicodemus Nalianya and Jane Sokwo

Eastern Pale Chanting Goshawk, *Nairobi National Park/ Atlas Square 75 B/ Sept* Shailesh Potel, Paul Johnson, Bernard Chege, Vincent Owuor and William Olang

Verreaux's Eagle Owl
Marigat Cliff / Atlas Square 49 D/Sept
Grephus Ingati

Golden-breasted Bunting, Eastern Honeybird, African Wood Owl, *City Park/ Atlas Square 75 B/ Sept*
Potluck Outing

Buff-bellied Warbler, Von der Decken's Hornbill, African Orange bellied Parrot, Pygmy Falcon, Mosque Swallow, *Wamba/ Maralal/Atlas Square 51 A/ Sept/*
Beata Owino and Longiro L.

Narina Trogon, Ayre's Hawk Eagle, *Bendela Lane, Spring Valley/ Atlas Square 75 B/ Aug* **African Swallow-tailed Kite,** *Sweet Waters, Laikipia/ Atlas Square 62 B/Sept/* Mike McCartney

Golden-tailed Woodpecker, *Mara River/ Atlas Square 74 A/ Aug/*
Philip Heckle, Heather Elkin, Alex Miller

Count UP

1212 (members)/ 2000 (target)

We need your support!

Recruit **one** other member!

★ VALUE ADDED!

Access to the UNEP Library!

The UNEP library has a collection of over 20,000 publications and 400 journals related to environmental issues.

The Library, which is located at the front lobby of the Gigiri complex, is open to the public on a daily basis. From Monday to Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and on Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Members are welcome to refer to the material and may make a certain amount of photocopies (free of charge but supply your own paper).

They offer limited internet access to environmental websites.

For further information, please contact the Chief Librarian, Ms. Shivona Tavares at 623105 or email: shivona.tavares@unep.org

Special Offer from KARENGATA VIDEO LIBRARY

This video library is offering free membership (worth Ksh1000/-!) to Nature Kenya members. Karengata Video Library is located at the Karen Shopping Centre, next to Selly's, Tana House.

Offer valid November and December this year.

NMK Horizons magazine

Available to Nature Kenya members at a reduced rate of 450/- per annum.

10% discount from 'Shaan E Punjab' Restaurant

Note that non-vegetarian authentic Punjabi cuisine has also been introduced at the restaurant.

This restaurant is located at Bishan Plaza, Mpaka Rd, Westlands, opposite 'Steers' and next to 'Open House'.

PUBLICATIONS

Otus irenege or Sokoke Scops-owl by Peter Hayman/Rare Bird Club

BIRDLIFE'S NEW RESCUE PLAN AIMS TO HALT BIRD EXTINCTION CRISIS

Every day the media reports on the political crises that afflict the world's hotspots. But we see and hear less about the unfolding global environmental crisis, reflected in the rising number of threatened bird species facing a real risk of extinction.

A new assessment shows the number of bird species threatened with global extinction rose dramatically by 75 from 1,111 in 1994 to 1,186 in 2000 – a shocking 12% of all bird species. Of the new total, 1,175 (99%) are at risk of extinction from human activities such as logging, intensive agriculture, longline fishing, hunting and tropping.

This alarming prognosis is one of the findings contained in BirdLife International's new book *Threatened Birds of the World*, the most authoritative and comprehensive assessment ever published on the status of the world's threatened bird species.

Why should we care?

These ecosystems have cultural, spiritual and intrinsic values and provide vital services such as maintaining global climate patterns, mediating the carbon cycle, safeguarding watersheds and stabilising soils which are valued at approximately US$33 trillion per year [1].

What are the main threats?

The main threats to birds are habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation, which threaten 1,008 (85%) of threatened species. The root causes of these threats are unsustainable logging and agricultural practices. A total of 367 (31%) threatened bird species are also directly exploited in some way (mainly through hunting for food or for trapping for the cage bird trade), but the main cause of extinction in recent times has been the presence of invasive species. Virtually all recent extinctians have been of island birds that lacked defences to human introduced predators such as rats and cats.

Action for species

Threotened species can be saved by actions taken to address specific threats, for example long-line fishing, invasive species, hunting and illegal trade, or by intensive species management through reintroduction programmes or recovery management. Places where bird life has suffered from widespread habitat loss and invasive species, such as the Hawaiian Islands and New Zealand, are those that now require intensive (and expensive) management of their remaining species and restoration of destroyed habitats.

Action for sites and habitats

Most species are threatened because of habitat loss; therefare the areas where threatened birds live represent some of the most damaged and precarious ecosystems in the world. Protection of particular localities where threatened species occur presents a relatively cost-effective woy of saving some of the world's mast threatened ecosystems. This is the ethos behind BirdLife's Important Bird Area (IBA) programme which is identifying a network of some 20,000 sites worldwide.

Shaping public policies

One of the most effective ways to start conserving ecosystems and their threatened species is through introducing or reforming appropriate international ond national legislation.

Conservation as an investment

A study by James et al [2] shows that between ten and one hundred times the level of conservation spending is required to address the current extinction crisis. Turning the tide of extinction is certainly a massive task and ta succeed it must be shared amongst the world's governments, businesses, NGOs and citizens.

Averting the extinction crisis

If we are to avert the global extinction crisis identified in *Threatened Birds of the World* we must act now. That is why, for the first time, the book identifies the solutions, practical actions, and specific conservation targets that need to be implemented or met by 2005 if we are to turn the tide. These include improving conditions for 10% of threatened bird species on the list, having each BirdLife Partner take responsibility far saving five threatened species and champions for at least 50% of all threatened species by 2005.

The need for more surveys and recovery plans, better funding, more effective laws, and more protected areas, is clearly set aut in the book alongside the key steps that need to be taken ta conserve the world's threatened birds, their habitats and the very ecosystems upan which we all depend.

The book cover, selected illustrations and supporting infarmation can be viewed on the BirdLife International website at www.birdlife.net

Threatened Birds of the World is available from November 2000 for US$ 95.00. Copies can be ordered from Lynx Edicions, Passeig de Gracia 12, 08007 Barcelona, Spain. Tel: +34 93301 0777; Fax: +34 93302 1475; Email: Lynx@hbw.com

NOTES

[1] Costanza, R., et al (1997) "The value of the world's ecosystem services and natural capital". Nature 387: 253-260.
[2] Jomes, A., et al (1999) "Balancing the Eorth's accounts". Nature 401: 323-324.

This article is based on the introduction to *Threatened Birds of the World* by David Capper and Alison Stattersfield, and was prepared by BirdLife International communication managers Richard Thomas and Michael Szabo.

Nature Kenya will keep you updated on bird conservation in eastern Africa and the world.

Geronticus eremita or Northern Bald Ibis by Hilary Burn/ Rare Bird Club